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Our Little Secrets

SMITH, SMYTHE, HEY, WHAT'S IN A NAME?

This just in from our friend Dave Marsh.

I am sure that the same claque that considers PBS beyond rebuke considers NPR also sacrosanct. Myself, I was cured when I had to endure a one hour interview with the network's most important culture program, about my book Louie Louie, with the interviewer, who I have known since dogs could talk, refusing for one minute to believe me when I pleaded, "But it's a COMEDY."

Gimme community radio and pirate radio but leave that sanctioned shit for the trash man.

But yesterday takes the cake. The NPR station in SF spent all day playing "Because the Night," etc because they were honoring Patti Smith's birthday. Patti Smith was born on December 30. Yesterday was the birthday of Patty Smythe (the twee pop singer now married to John McEnroe). And those smug yuppies don't know the difference.

I rest my case. And go off to console myself that at least they won't confuse Luther Ingram for Luther Vandross on Luther's birthday. And not because they know the difference.

RACICOT: "THE WHITE COLIN POWELL"?

BY JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

When the Florida recount fiasco was at full throttle, the Bush team called in one of its top fixers to deal with the media and help put the finishing touches on the brusque strategy that helped seal the election. That man was Marc Racicot, the former governor of Mon-

(**OLS** *continued on page 2*)

Judy Miller's War

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Lay all Judith Miller's New York Times stories end to end, from late 2001 to June 2003 and you get a desolate picture of a reporter with an agenda, both manipulating and being manipulated by US government officials, Iraqi exiles and defectors, an entire Noah's Ark of scam-artists.

And while Miller, either under her own single by-line or with NYT colleagues, was touting the bioterror threat, her book Germs, co-authored with Times-men Steven Engelberg and William Broad was in the bookstores and climbing the best seller lists. The same day that Miller opened an envelope of white powder (which turned out to be harmless) at her desk at the New York Times, her book was #6 on the New York Times best seller list. The following week (October 21, 2001), it reached #2. By October 28, —at the height of her scare-mongering campaign—it was up to #1. If we were cynical…

We don't have full 20/20 hindsight yet, but we do know for certain that all the sensational disclosures in Miller's major stories between late 2001 and early summer, 2003, promoted disingenuous lies. There were no secret biolabs under Saddam's palaces; no nuclear factories across Iraq secretly working at full tilt. A huge percentage of what Miller wrote was garbage, garbage that powered the Bush administration's propaganda drive towards invasion.

What does that make Miller? She was a witting cheer-leader for war. She knew what she was doing.

And what does Miller's performance make the New York Times? Didn't any senior editors at the Times or even the boss, A.O. Sulzberger, ask themselves whether it was appropriate to have a trio of Times reporters touting their book Germs on tv and radio, while simultaneously running stories in the New York Times headlining the risks of biowar and thus creating just the sort of public alarm beneficial to the sales of their book. Isn't that the sort of conflict of interest prosecutors have been hounding Wall Street punters for?

The knives are certainly out for Miller. Leaked internal email traffic disclosed Miller's self-confessed reliance on Ahmad Chalabi, a leading Iraqi exile with every motive to produce imaginative defectors eager to testify about Saddam's biowar, chemical and nuclear arsenal. In late June Howard Kurtz of the Washington Post ran a long story about Miller's ability in recent months to make the US Army jump, merely by threatening to go straight to Rumsfeld.

It was funny, but again, the conflicts of interest put the Times in a terrible light. Here was Miller, with a contract to write a new book on the post-invasion search for "weapons of mass destruction", lodged in the Army unit charged with that search, fiercely insisting that the unit prolong its futile hunt, while also working hand in glove with Chalabi. Journalists have to do some complex dance steps to get good stories, but a few red flags should have gone up on that one.

A brisk, selective timeline:

December 20, 2001, Headline, "Iraqi Tells of Renovations at Sites For Chemical and Nuclear Arms". Miller rolls out a new Iraqi defector, in the ripe tradition of her favorite, Khidir Hamza, the utter fraud who called himself Saddam's Bombmaker.

Story: "An Iraqi defector who described himself as a civil engineer said he personally worked on renovations of secret facilities for biological, chemical and nuclear weapons in underground wells, private villas and under the Saddam Hussein Hospital in Baghdad as recently as a year ago.

(**Miller** *continued on page 6)*

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Our Little Secrets

tana. Many thought he would be rewarded for his efforts with a top post in the Bush White House. Although he was on the short list for both Secretary of the Interior and Attorney General, Racicot ended up in a cushy billet, as head of the Republican National Committee, where his deft fundraising abilities crammed the RNC vaults with a record $250 million in soft money contributions for the 2002 election cycle.

Racicot didn't just sit on that mountain of cash; he used it like a daisy-cutter bomb on Democrats. He is credited, along with Karl Rove, of devising the media strategy that yielded such great triumphs for the Republicans in the 2002 elections. In early June of this year,, Bush picked Racicot as the chairman of his re-election campaign.

It was an astute choice and already the corporate loot is pouring into the Bush campaign coffers. Although his name is hard to pronounce (Ross-Co), Racicot presents a kinder media presence than the other visigoths in the Bush camp. One Republican staffer called him "the white Colin Powell, the only two Bush advisers with any kind of sex appeal." Racicot, whose hair is as delicately managed as John Kerry's, may look benign next to the frightful visages of Rove and Rumsfeld but he's a ruthless politician who is as far to the right as anyone in the Bush inner circle. Just ask those who know him best: the people of Montana.

Editors
Alexander Cockburn
Jeffrey St. Clair

Business
Becky Grant

Design
Deborah Thomas

Counselor
Ben Sonnenberg

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CounterPunch
PO Box 228
Petrolia, CA 95558
1-800-840-3683 (phone)
counterpunch@counterpunch.org
www.counterpunch.org

Racicot served as governor of Montana from 1994 through 2000, where he slashed taxes, acted as errand boy for big timber, deregulated the state's electric utilities and moaned ceaselessly about the oppressive hand of the federal government. Prior to that Racicot served two terms as attorney general for the Big Sky state. These days Montana's once robust economy is in ruins. The current governor, Racicot's bumbling protégé Judy Martz, gets most the blame for the crisis and lumbers along with an approval rating of 23 percent. But Racicot's savage economic policies laid the foundations for the disasters that now plagues the state: record deficits, bankrupt schools and a senescent economy.

While Racicot slashed services and taxes, he also funneled what little money remained in the Montana treasury into costly projects that benefited political donors. For example, Racicot spent tens of millions of dollars on a new software system for the state government that was supposed to minutely track agency budgets and expenditures. A decade and $50 million later, the system still doesn't function and the workings of the state's budget (now deep in the red) remain as opaque as the rituals of Eleusis.

Although the state of Montana was veering toward bankruptcy, Racicot sank $100 million into the construction of new prisons, which were built by political donors. Yet Montana was one of the few states with an overcapacity of prison beds. The prisons went up anyway and despite a slate of harsh new laws passed under Racicot and Martz to lock up more Montanans the new prisons remain underbooked. Now, Montana is desperately looking to rent out its empty cells to other states.

His cavalier approach to the state's health care services was even more disastrous. Racicot pushed through a $400 million scheme to privatize Montana's mental health care system. But less than two years after it was put into place, the new program collapsed, pushing schizophrenics and other patients out onto the streets and off of needed medications. The state is now faced with recreating a system that Racicot destroyed.

When Montana's schools began to falter from the budget squeeze, Racicot offered a quick fix: log off the remaining old growth on state lands and cycle the receipts to the schools. This scheme, dubbed clearcuts for classrooms by local environmentalists, ravaged Montana's forests, but did almost nothing to help the state's beleaguered school system. Using the same rationale, Racicot also began selling off state park and forestlands near urban areas to his corporate cronies for shopping centers, office buildings and subdivisions.

Montana once enjoyed the toughest clean water laws in the country. Racicot dismantled them in 1995 when he signed a bill backed by mining and oil companies which raised limits on the discharge of toxins and carcinogens into Montana's streams, allowed corporations the right to police their own conduct and at the behest of the coal methane producers expanded the luxury to foul groundwater to the very boundaries of a polluter's property.

This was followed by Racicot's big gift to the strip-mining lobby. Despite the fact that Montana, which bears the historical scars of the strip-and-run coal companies, is the only state in the nation whose constitution requires the reclamation of all lands disturbed by mining, Racicot signed into a law a measure that exempts open pit mines from any responsibility to restore the mess they make, a mess often contaminated with cyanide and other toxic debris.

Perhaps the biggest fiasco of Racicot's tenure as governor was his role in deregulating Montana's electric utilities, which allowed Montana Power Company to sell off its generating stations, dams, power lines and water rights to PPL (Pennsylvania Power and Light). In exchange, Montana ratepayers saw their utility bills soar by more than 50 percent, from one of the lowest in the nation to the highest.

Racicot forged a close friendship with Bush in 1995, when the two men began working together on anti-regulatory initiatives for the Western Governor's Association and the National Governor's Association. The relationship between the two governors proved so cozy that there was speculation in Montana that Bush might pick Racicot as his running mate in 2000. Ultimately, Cheney picked himself for that position and the golden boy from Montana went to work in the DC office of Bracewell & Patterson, a Houston law firm with close ties to Bush that specializes in advancing the agendas of oil and gas companies.

One of Racicot's chief clients during those tumultuous early days of the Bush ad-

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ministration was in dire need of a well-placed hand: Enron. Even after Racicot was selected to head the RNC, he refused to drop Enron as a client. His efforts to protect Enron during its time of tribulation certainly paid off for the company's executives. While Martha Stewart faces federal charges over a $200,000 stock deal, Enron executives Ken Lay and Jeffrey Skilling, who bilked investors out of billions, enjoy afternoons on the most exclusive golf courses in Houston.

After Racicot became chairman of the RNC he moved his office to the party's headquarters a couple of blocks from the White House. Even though he rarely went into the law office and had no official roster of clients, Racicot continues to pull down a six-figure paycheck from Bracewell & Patterson. "I have certainly provided advice and counsel to some private people with private business activities that have not been governmentally related," Racicot said. "So I have done some things, but it has been very limited. So as a result of that I have honored the terms of the employment agreement and they were in such a frame of mind that they thought (leading the Republican Party) was something constructive for me to be engaged in and they acquiesced to my involvement."

The new head of the Bush campaign sees no reason to recuse himself from such easy money now.

WTO FOOD FRAUD

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN

They're saving the world from hunger again. This time the bold crusaders mustered in Sacramento, California in late June to proclaim the glories of chemical-industrial agriculture, biotech, genetically modified crops and livestock, and kindred expressions of the modern age. The forum was a federally sponsored Ministerial Conference and Expo of Agricultural Science and Technology.

As thousands opposing biotech demonstrated in the streets of Sacramento, US officials like ag secretary Ann Veneman pounded the drum for high-tech agriculture, Under the approving eyes of bigwigs from firms like Monsanto. Said Veneman, "This conference is for those most in need. It [hunger] has to become a global agenda... new approaches are needed."

Was there ever a moment, in the long tradition of such overblown rhetoric, that "new approaches" weren't needed. Scour through all the old speeches across the past century about starving billions around the planet or starving millions right here in the USA, and it's always the same profession of noble purpose.

"We can end hunger now", declared the sales folk for the Green Revolution that peaked in expectation in 1971 when Dr Norman Borlaug got the Nobel Peace Prize for his invention of Mexican miracle wheat, heavily backed by the Rockefeller Foundation. And indeed miracle wheat paid off handsomely for rich farmers on expensively irrigated land in Sonora. But, as always, intensive monoculture drove marginal, subsistence farmers off the land and the Mexican poor people hated Dr Borlaug's low gluten wheat, same way the peasants and poor urban dwellers of south and south-east Asia hated the first "miracle" rice, IR-8, because it cooked up mushy and tasted bad.

"History may well record that the Green Revolution was a greater disaster than our Vietnam intervention." So wrote John and Karen Hess in their funny, fiery book The Taste of America, published back in 1977. They were probably right, if you add up all the Greater Than Expected Deaths (as the statisticians put it) in third world countries savaged by techno-fixers from the First World trying to make world agricultural production safe for capitalism.

Racicot is as far to the right as anyone in the Bush inner circle. Just ask those who know him best: the people of Montana.

The techno-fixers moved in step with the counter-insurgency forces , who also acted to save world agricultural production, but more drastically.

In the 1950s, when the peoples of Guatemala and Iran elected governments committed to land reform, the CIA paid for coups to kill the reformers and protect the old land barons. This sanction, exercised by CIA, advisors, technicians from USAID, death squads and allied agents, extended across Latin America for the next 30 years, crowned by the butchering of 200,000 Mayans in Guatemala in the 1980s.

The other side of the world, when the land barons of Afghanistan were threatened by a revolution there in the late 1970s, supported by the Soviets, the CIA pumped in aid and fanatical Islamic advisers. The opium-growing land barons returned, and flourish, rich on opium harvests that are now the highest in the country's history, amid desperate hunger of most Afghans.

It wouldn't be hard to feed all the people on the planet. The Malthusian thesis about population growth outstripping means of subsistence has long since been disproved. The imperatives of capital are always searingly obvious in agriculture, as is made manifest if you fly south down California's Central Valley, ground zero for an agricultural system based on oil (oil-based pesticides; fertilizer , courtesy of natural gas); absentee ownership, mostly by banks; and water allocated by water boards controlled by the land barons via politicians in their pay.

The latest techno-revolution, merely underlines the obvious. "Advances" in agricultural technology are mostly ways to tie the farmer into a cycle of debt peonage; to restrict production in favor of the big growers and send the little guy to the wall. (Witness the fate of strains of corn or wheat perfected by peasants over centuries, as with Indians and hard wheat, later appropriated by Canadian farmers.)

All the major American food programs suffer from the same vise of hypocrisy. Food for Peace in the 1950s, touted as America's gift to the world's starving, was a sophisticated dumping scheme, also a way of supporting the US's military allies with food. FDR's farm programs in the New Deal favored big agricultural concerns and pushed thousands of subsistence farmers off the land. At least we can thank FDR and his ag secretary Henry Wallace for the Chicago bluesmen who wended their way north after New Deal subsidies to the southern land barons to take their acres out of production destroyed all prospects for the sharecroppers.

Thirty years ago American politicians felt it necessary to make stirring speeches in support of the family farmer. You don't hear much of that talk now after the latest holocaust of corporate takeover and integration, except maybe from Democratic candidates working the Iowa caucuses every four years.

US agriculture is controlled by about five monstrous corporations and it's trending the same way across the planet. The way to ensure there aren't hungry people in the world is to give peasants land, unencumbered by debt peonage. The US has spent the last 150 years ensuring that precisely the opposite conditions prevail, exactly as the corporate carnival in Sacramento attested. CP

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Love, Marriage and Lawrence v. Texas

It's a Sex Thing

BY JoAnn Wypijewski

Toward the back of the Gay Pride parade in New York on June 29 a group of rickshaws tooled around bearing happy couples, some with wedding garb or at least flower bouquets, followed by a white stretch limo draped in pink net and paper bells. They called themselves The Wedding Party and passed out stickers saying "It's a Love Thing", and, as if with a clear of the throat, "and a legal thing".

A few days earlier I was in Sheridan Square amid the throng celebrating the Supreme Court's 6-3 decision in the case of Lawrence v. Texas, striking down the nation's remaining sodomy laws and overruling the odious 1986 decision in Bowers v. Hardwick. There was a lot of talk of love and legality that evening too, references to wedding rings as the next battle cry, bows to Vermont and Canada — though City Councilwoman Margarita Lopez raised a cheer too with her drawn-out and vaguely dirty-sounding pronunciation of "for-ni-ca-tion!" Love and sex, liberty and law, yoked in the eternal push-pull. The other day Newsweek had a cover story bemoaning sexless marriage, apparently become the norm among straight professionals too exhausted by the job, the house and the endless round of children's activities; now the people who brought us sexual freedom, gender-bending and a new definition of family are plumping for the marriage contract.

Of course, expecting gay people to be society's sex mavericks is a little like expecting black people to be its social conscience. It's not homosexuals' life mission to provide heterosexuals with models for the myriad possibilities of human sexuality. (Though who but the most pinched fundamentalist couldn't take delight in contemplating the cultural etymology of the film "Bend Over, Boyfriend", which a couple of years ago became the top-selling straight porn video, as marrieds in the Heartland discovered the joys of the strap-on?) And, of course, gay people want to get married for the same reason straight ones do: the health insurance, the tax benefits, the children, the property rights. Like any dewy-eyed romantic, the woman who publicly proposed to her girlfriend at the end of the Pride parade probably wasn't thinking about legal separation, divorce, lawyers' fees, the piece on the side or any of the other less-alluring accoutrements of state-sanctioned union. No one likes to dwell on it, but the marriage system could survive just fine without white tulle and roses; it would collapse without divorce and adultery.

It's unlikely gay marriage would change that, though things are clearly desperate in the straight world when no less a conservative than New York Times columnist William Safire hopes it will. The family's a wreck, spouses are splitting and people don't even have Thanksgiving at home anymore. In this dire situation, "maybe competition from responsible gays would revive opposite-sex marriage", Safire writes, imagining a new kind of keeping up with the Joneses. He must have missed the recent report in his own paper about the tribulations of out-of-state couples who journeyed to Vermont for their civil union a few years ago and now, their bliss gone bad, are hard-pressed to get out of it because dissolution requires state residency. "There's a thin line between love and hate", as the man sang, and no law or convention has yet been devised to make it otherwise. On the heels of The Wedding Party in the Pride parade came the Anti-Violence Project with its banner on domestic abuse. Vickie, a counselor with the project, reported what I've heard from people who do the same work among heterosexuals: especially since 9-11, battering cases have spiked up. What with economic calamity and fear of life-out -of-control, love is too thin a reed to hold all it's expected to, with or without devotion by legal contract.

> ***Expecting gay people to be society's sex mavericks is a little like expecting black people to be its social conscience.***

It's all too bad that the Lawrence decision has devolved to a discussion of marriage, because what it articulated was far more profound. It no more suggested a right to marry than it asserted a right to engage in sodomy, but it did affirm something that has been at the core of gay liberation, and that has been unappreciated by many straight leftists and liberals who always thought the sex talk was secondary to the really big issues. Justice Kennedy, who wrote the majority opinion, is too starched to say "Everything begins with sex", but how else to interpret his assertion that "when homosexual conduct is made criminal by the law of the state, that declaration in and of itself is an invitation to subject homosexual persons to discrimination both in the public and in the private spheres"?

In other words, if the state can criminalize and demonize, control, threaten and persecute persons in the most intimate sphere of life, it can do anything: deny them jobs, housing, equality, respect, safety, liberty, happiness. Indeed, it does all those things.

What the Court did was pull out one of the major struts supporting compulsory heterosexuality; by embracing Justice John Paul Stevens' dissent in Bowers, which asserted that the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment "extends to intimate choices by unmarried as well as married persons", it also rang a chime for sexual freedom against the claims of conventionalists, straight and gay, who would have us all in little boxes run round with the picket fence.

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As it is, Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for the dissent, recognized the potential reach of the decision more than even many of those who praised it.

After the Sheridan Square rally, I bumped into a friend of CounterPunch, an adamant sex radical with a highly developed sense of the sour. He was fulminating that people were celebrating even though "if I pulled my dick out in Washington Square right now I could still be arrested!" What he meant, upon clarification, was that were he discovered having sex in the park Men's Room, the police could cart him and the other fellow off to jail and the Court's decision would not affect that in the least. Moreover, the gay cheerleaders for marriage would let them rot. He's quite right, but then who would expect the Supreme Court, establishment poo-bah of probity, to sanction sex in public toilets? Who would want it to?

Most people who have sex in such private public spaces, whether Washington Square or the Oval Office, don't do so because they have no bedroom. It's all about the danger, the allure of anonymity, the prospect of getting caught but not quite. Domesticate that and the thrill really is gone. It is an exquisitely delicate game, to be sure. Dangerous desires are not usually the same as wanting actual danger.

Police in New York once understood this and looked the other way; not so since Giulianni time, with "quality of life" policing, sex district demolition and vice busts. But it will take something more thoroughgoing than a Supreme Court decision to put that kind of fun back in Fun City.

As it is, Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for the dissent, recognized the potential reach of the decision more than even many of those who praised it. The State of Texas had claimed that it had the right to control anyone's sexuality outside of marriage; homosexuals just happened to be the target here. And Scalia, for all his ranting about the "homosexual agenda", was angered fundamentally by the majority's rejection of that control. Sanction sodomy, he said, and you might as well eliminate laws against adultery, masturbation, bestiality, prostitution.

Privilege privacy, he didn't quite say, and you might as well uphold abortion rights. Champion liberty, and you undermine the repressive power of the state. "There is no right to 'liberty' under the Due Process Clause", he flatly stated.

And then, proving that there really is a syntax of bigotry which sustains itself across the eras and that the next logical battle is over full civil rights, he wrote, "Many Americans do not want persons who openly engage in homosexual conduct as partners in their business, as scoutmasters for their children, as teachers in their children's schools, or as boarders in their home."

As it happened, the same day he made that declaration from the bench, Strom Thurmond died in South Carolina. And the same day's paper that reprinted Scalia's dissent remembered the old racist's stump speech for president in 1948: "On the question of social intermingling of the races, our people draw the line…. All the laws of Washington and all the bayonets of the Army cannot force the Negro into our homes, into our schools, our churches and our places of recreation and amusement." When Strom said that, an awful lot of white folks of means had Negroes in their homes, cooking their food, tending their aged, rearing their children. They just didn't have Negroes in their beds, which was always the main fear. Then as now, it was a sex thing.

As the parade ended and people poured into the Greenwich Village streets, I saw a skinny white boy and a skinny black boy, maybe 16, both shirtless, arm in arm, looking around in wonder. Anywhere else in the city, or any other time, they couldn't be so street-innocent, never mind so sweetly affectionate. What was remarkable for me, not having been to a Pride parade in a few years, was that they, we, were walking in a sea of youth and color: all these little hip-hoppers with baggy basketball jerseys and cubix zirconia ear studs; Asian boys with slim hips and spikey hair; butch black and Latina girls and their fem-boy or girl friends all in a gang; big nut-colored women, fleshy and some without shirts, only bright pink stickers on their nipples saying "My Bedroom, My Business"; beautiful young black men exercised to a heroic ideal, raggedy deaf kids of indeterminate race; dred-locked Caribbeans, an Asian drag queen done up in peacock feathers; a white bearded guy done up like an aging Guinevere; a Venezuelan crew, outfitted in tight faux tiger skins, their chests a-glitter, their skulls crowned by pre-Columbian-style feather headdresses, their hands gripping staffs topped with arcing black marabou and a tiger 's face. Note to Al Sharpton: the young brothers and sisters are out and many (and had only Dean and Kerry signs to look at).

Note to the peace crowd: "Feygelehs Against the Occupation" cut neatly through the "complexities" of the Middle East; "Israel Out of Palestine", "More Fucking, Less Killing", "Sodomy, Not Imperialism" were their frisky cries. Note to the marriage crowd: the young things I spoke with weren't convinced their heart's desire lay in replicating straight coupledom.

As I headed home, I saw an overweight leather man leading his masked "slave", mostly naked but for a few well-placed strips of black leather, by his neck chain through a crowd of lusty lesbians and into a bar. It was bracing to see some things haven't changed. CP

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(**Miller** *continued from page 1*)

"The defector, Adnan Ihsan Saeed al-Haideri, gave details of the projects he said he worked on for President Saddam Hussein's government in an extensive interview last week in Bangkok...The interview with Mr. Saeed was arranged by the Iraqi National Congress, the main Iraqi opposition group, which seeks the overthrow of Mr. Hussein. If verified, Mr. Saeed's allegations would provide ammunition to officials within the Bush administration who have been arguing that Mr. Hussein should be driven from power partly because of his unwillingness to stop making weapons of mass destruction…" Notice the sedate phrase "if verified". It never was verified. But the story served its purpose.

September 7, 2002: Headline: "US says Hussein intensifies quest for a-bomb parts". This one was by Miller and Michael Gordon, promoting the aluminum tube nonsense: "In the last 14 months, Iraq has sought to buy thousands of specially designed aluminum tubes, which American officials believe were intended as components of centrifuges to enrich uranium." All lies of course. Miller and Gordon emphasize "Mr. Hussein's dogged insistence on pursuing his nuclear ambitions, along with what defectors described in interviews as Iraq's push to improve and expand Baghdad's chemical and biological arsenals".

Another of Miller's defectors takes a bow: "Speaking on the condition that neither he nor the country in which he was interviewed be identified, Ahmed al-Shemri, his pseudonym, said Iraq had continued developing, producing and storing chemical agents at many mobile and fixed secret sites throughout the country, many of them underground.

"All of Iraq is one large storage facility," said Mr. Shemri. Asked about his allegations, American officials said they believed these reports were accurate…"

A final bit of chicanery from Gordon and Miller: "Iraq denied the existence of a germ warfare program entirely until 1995, when United Nations inspectors forced Baghdad to acknowledge it had such an effort. Then, after insisting that it had never weaponized bacteria or filled warheads, it again belatedly acknowledged having done so after Hussein Kamel, Mr. Hussein's brother-in-law, defected to Jordan with evidence about the scale of the germ warfare program." What Gordon and Miller leave out (or lacked the enterprise or desire to find out) is that Hussein Kamel told UN Inspectors that he had destroyed all Iraq's WMDs, on Saddam Hussein's orders.

September 13, 2002, headline: "White House Lists Iraq Steps To Build Banned Weapons". Miller and Gordon again, taking at face value the administration's claims that it was "the intelligence agencies' unanimous view that the type of [aluminum]tubes that Iraq has been seeking are used to make such centrifuges." If nothing else this shows what rotten reporters Miller and Gordon are, because it now turns out the intelligence analysts across Washington were deeply divided on precisely this issue.

September 18, 2002, "Verification Is Difficult at Best, Say the Experts, and Maybe Impossible". This is Miller helping the War Party lay down a preemptive barrage against the UN Inspectors: "verifying Iraq's assertions that it has abandoned weapons of mass destruction, or finding evidence that it has not done so, may not be feasible, according to officials and former weapons inspectors…" Then a cameo appearance by Hamza: reporting his supposed knowledge that "Iraq was now at the 'pilot plant' stage of nuclear production and within two to three years of mass producing centrifuges to enrich uranium for a bomb."

December 3, 2002, a Miller Special, murky with unidentified informants: "C.I.A. Hunts Iraq Tie to Soviet Smallpox". Classic Miller: "The C.I.A. is investigating an informant's accusation that Iraq obtained a particularly virulent strain of smallpox from a Russian scientist who worked in a smallpox lab in Moscow during Soviet times…"

January 24, 2003:"Defectors Bolster U.S. Case Against Iraq, Officials Say". Another Miller onslaught on the UN inspectors: "Former Iraqi scientists, military officers and contractors have provided American intelligence agencies with a portrait of Saddam Hussein's secret programs to develop and conceal chemical, biological and nuclear weapons that is starkly at odds with the findings so far of the United Nations weapons inspectors."

Al-Haideri is still in play: "Intelligence officials said that some of the most valuable information has come from Adnan Ihsan Saeed al-Haideri, a contractor who fled Iraq in the summer of 2001. He later told American officials that chemical and biological weapons laboratories were hidden beneath hospitals and inside presidential palaces. Mr. Haideri was relocated anonymously to a small town in Virginia."

We'll leave al-Haideri in well-earned retirement and Miller heading towards her supreme triumph of April 20, 2003, relaying the allegations of chemical and bioweapon dumps made by an unnamed Iraqi scientist she'd never met. CP

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